

DM/S
57-4356

December 20, 1957

Mr. Allen W. Dulles
Director, Central Intelligence Agency

Dear Mr. Dulles:

January 16, 1958, marks the 75th Anniversary of the Civil Service Act of 1883, which established the Federal merit system and founded the United States Civil Service Commission. This constructive legislation, so carefully drawn that its basic provisions stand virtually unchanged today, is the foundation of a merit system that now covers more than two million Federal workers.

The Commission traditionally observes this anniversary with an annual awards ceremony honoring those of its employees who have earned recognition for their on-the-job achievements and for length of service. Because the Diamond Anniversary is such a significant milestone, we are broadening our ceremony this year and inviting many friends of the merit system and of the Commission to participate. We of the Commission would like to have you join us on January 16 at 10:30 a.m. in the Departmental Auditorium.

The Commission's Diamond Jubilee Awards Ceremony launches a year-long Nationwide observance of the 75th Anniversary of the Merit System. The observance will be a "grass roots" effort conducted through local committees in scores of centers of Federal employment throughout the country. The objective of the observance is to gain for the career civil service the broad public understanding and support that is so necessary to the recruitment and maintenance of an effective work force. Many organizations will participate in an intensive educational effort to generate public interest in the Federal service--to develop awareness and appreciation of the people who compose it, the important work they perform, and the satisfying career opportunities it offers.

The theme of the Commission's birthday ceremony will be "75 years of service to America," with accent on the people in the

public service. We will be honoring the many individuals and organizations who have contributed to the merit system over the past three-quarters of a century and more.

In keeping with the theme of the observance, many individuals and organizations have sent letters or resolutions expressing their interest in and support of the merit system and extending felicitations on the anniversary. So that all of our employees will be aware of this warm feeling and support, we plan to set aside space in the Departmental Auditorium to display such messages. After the ceremony, all of the communications will be placed in an exhibit in the Commission's Main Building. We will be glad to include in this exhibit any message you may feel appropriate on this occasion.

You will soon receive our invitation to the January 16 ceremony. I hope that you will be able to join us.

Sincerely,

15/
Harris Ellsworth
Chairman